

The Michigan Association of Timbermen

I would like to thank you, Mister Chairmen and your fellow Transportation committee members, for allowing me to speak before your committee. The Michigan Association of Timbermen (MAT) is proud to support House Bill 5641. The Michigan Association of Timbermen represents a broad cross section of forest products industry within Michigan.

House Bill 5641 contains amendments to clarify the use of the current "Log Plate". There has been some confusion by the officers of the Michigan State Police Motor Carrier Division on just how the "Log Plate" can be used. By passing these amendments, the true intent of the "Log Plate" will be better defined.

Michigan Vehicle Code Act 300 of 1949 MCL 257.801(d) states:

"For a road tractor, truck, or truck tractor owned by a wood harvester and used exclusively in connection with the wood harvesting operations or a truck used exclusively to haul milk from the farm to the first point of delivery, 74 cents per 100 pounds of empty weight of the road tractor, truck, or truck tractor. A registration secured by payment of the fee as prescribed in the subdivision continues in full force and effect until the regular expiration date of the registration. As used in this subdivision, "wood harvester" includes the person or persons hauling and transporting raw materials in the form produced at the harvest site. As used in this subdivision, "wood harvesting operations" does not include the transportation of processed lumber, Christmas trees, or processed firewood for a profit making venture."

In the Northern regions of Michigan, the enforcement of the "Log Plate" is a reflection of the true intent of this bill, however, in the state's southern regions there are numerous occasions when our members are being wrongfully ticketed and their log plates taken away when they are indeed using the "Log Plate" in a legal fashion. These wrongful citations are costing our members time and money to fight these citations, not to mention the cost to our law enforcement agencies. The majority of the citations pertain to the hauling of logging equipment. Fortunately, MAT and the Motor Carrier Division have a good working relationship and we have been able to resolve many of these wrongful citations before they got too far into the legal process.

We feel that the inclusion of the proposed changes will better define the "Log Plate", thus reducing the number of citations wrongfully issued and also reducing costs to our members and the State of Michigan. The "Log Plate" provides a tremendous savings to our industry, approximately \$2,700.00 per truck. We strongly support HB 5641 as it will help strengthen and clarify the already successful "Log Plate". Thank you for your time and the opportunity speak before the committee.

Submitted by:

Thomas A Barnes
Executive Director
Michigan Association of Timbermen